

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 20 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey to you the position of the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council concerning the occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran, since 1971, of three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, Big Tumb, Little Tumb and Abu Musa. That position is reflected in the Ministerial Declaration of the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, adopted at its seventy-eighth session, held in Riyadh on 17 March 2001. The Declaration reads as follows:

"The Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council undertook a mandate from the Supreme Council to examine all available peaceful means of ensuring the restoration to the United Arab Emirates of its legitimate rights over three islands, Big Tumb, Little Tumb and Abu Musa, which are still under occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Ministerial Council took the view that the rejection by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the many peace initiatives aimed at settling the question of the three islands — most recently the efforts of the Tripartite Commission — is inconsistent with statements by the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding its readiness to engage in dialogue and put an end to the tension, and does not augur well for security and stability in the Arabian Gulf. Moreover, it is impeding the development of relations between the parties. Accordingly, the Ministerial Council is actively pursuing its mandate.

The Council strongly objects to the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran is preparing to build housing and settle people on those three islands, with the aim of changing the size of the population and the demographic composition, contrary to the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Accordingly, the Council demands an immediate halt to such construction.

The Council again reaffirmed its support for the rights of the United Arab Emirates over the three islands, Big Tumb, Little Tumb and Abu Musa, which are under occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran. It rejected the continuing occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of those islands, which belong to the United Arab Emirates. The Council also reaffirmed the full sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the three islands, which it considers to be an indivisible part of the United Arab Emirates. It declared that the United Arab Emirates continues to preserve all its rights over the islands and that the



Council does not recognize any sovereignty other than that of the United Arab Emirates over the three islands, their territorial waters, their airspace, their continental shelf and their exclusive economic zone.

The Council condemns the transgressions and military manoeuvres on the part of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the three occupied islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and in their territorial waters. It demands that the Islamic Republic of Iran put an end to such manoeuvres, which it regards as constituting not only acts of provocation that threaten security and stability in the Arabian Gulf, but also a source of deep concern and an impediment to confidence-building.

The Council further supports all the measures adopted by the United Arab Emirates to regain its sovereignty over the three islands by peaceful means, on the basis of the principle of collective security among the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. It appeals to the Islamic Republic of Iran to agree to refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice, the organ that is competent to resolve border conflicts between States. Special mention should be made of the fact that the United Arab Emirates announced beforehand that it would accept arbitration by the International Court of Justice in the aforementioned dispute. The Court is an organ that has always enjoyed the confidence of many States in the settlement of border conflicts. Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran has, on more than one occasion, resorted to the Court in order to assert its rights."

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Mohammad J. Samhan
Ambassador
Permanent Representative